

**Council on Postsecondary Education  
Committee on Equal Opportunities  
October 17, 2005**

## **Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES)**

Members of the Committee on Equal Opportunities met with two representatives from the KEES Policy Workgroup, Tuesday, September 27, 2005, to receive information related to updating current KEES policy. A multi-agency workgroup, the Council on Postsecondary Education, Kentucky Department of Education, and the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority—was established several months ago to review the current KEES policy.

Dr. Joe McCormick, executive director of the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) and Kentucky Higher Education Student Loan Corporation (KHESLC), and Dr. Dianne Bazell, assistant vice president of academic affairs at the Council, provided information to the CEO about the primary areas being reviewed by the KEES policy workgroup. The CEO members raised questions about a revised KEES policy that could have considerable impact (negative) on the number and amount of awards distributed to African Americans, as well as other minority groups.

The workgroup is looking at policy issues that include: 1) continual payment of merit awards and the fiscal impact on the state, 2) poor college preparation and the message sent to students and parents that they are properly prepared for college, when in fact they are not, and 3) loss of first-time freshmen to out-of-state institutions.

Enacted in 1998 by the Kentucky General Assembly, Senate Bill 21 provides merit-based grants to high school graduates to assist with college expenses at public and private institutions in Kentucky. The amount and eligibility for the merit-based award is determined exclusively by academic achievement, based upon a student's high school GPA. A companion award, the ACT supplemental award, is based upon the student's college entrance exam score.

Members of the CEO are asked to review the KEES policy issues and offer suggestions for consideration by the Council and the workgroup. Representatives from the workgroup will be available to provide additional information or to respond to questions.